Gram Sevak

MAY 1957

"There is pleasure in work—more so in community work."

Thought for the Month

AN IDEAL Indian village will be so constructed as to lend itself to perfect sanitation. It will have cottages with sufficient light and ventilation built of a material obtainable within a radius of five miles of it. The cottages will have courtyards enabling householders to plant vegetables for domestic use and to house their cattle. The village lanes and streets will be free of all avoidable dust. It will have wells according to its needs and accessible to all. It will have houses of worship for all, also a common meeting place, a village common for grazing its cattle, a co-operative dairy, primary and secondary schools in which industrial education will be the central fact, and it will have panchayats for settling disputes. It will produce its own grains, vegetables and fruit, and its own Khadi. This is roughly my idea of a model village.

—*Mahatma Gandhi*

मज़दूर मंजिल

ग्राम सेवक

GRAM SEVAK

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MUSSOORIE CONFERENCE

YOU MUST have read in the newspapers what happened at the Sixth Development Commissioners' Conference at Mussoorie. It was a very important meeting where our leaders took stock of the situation, looked back at what had been achieved and decided on future plans of action.

Some very important decisions were taken at the Conference. Our Prime Minister categorically stated that co-operative farming was the only way to improve our agriculture. The idea of co-operative farming, he felt, was inherent in the Community Development Programme. It formed the basis of new urges in rural areas. With this clear-cut exposition, it becomes our bounden duty to popularize the idea of co-operative farming in the villages. We do not propose to introduce co-operative farming by imposing it from above. Its acceptance is based on the willingness of the people.

The Prime Minister also referred to the important role which, the Gram Sevaks are playing in the villages. He realized that a single Gram Sevak could not do full justice to his work if 5 or 10 villages were placed under his charge. Ultimately, the Government proposed to post one Gram Sevak in every village. This is indeed gratifying. But till the Government is able to achieve this ideal, we will leave no stone unturned to complete the job assigned to us in a befitting way.

Doubts have sometimes been expressed about the objective and the nature of the Community Development Programme. Shri V. T. Krishnamachari, the Vice-Chairman of the Planning Commission, set at rest all these doubts. He declared in the Development Commissioners' Conference that the Community Development Programme is not a special programme with temporary objectives. It is the permanent pattern of the Welfare State. It recognizes that rural improvement is a continuous process. It covers all aspects of rural life. It is the main concern of every branch of the administration reaching down to the district and village. At every stage, it seeks the assistance of the best non-official leadership. There cannot be a better enunciation of the objective of our programme. My Gram Sevak friends working in the remote corners of the great sub-continent of India should now realize that they have a permanent assignment and a regular role to play in the making of the new India. Initial difficulties and hardships should not deter us from our path of duty. We must strive to achieve our goal with redoubled enthusiasm.

—A FIELD WORKER

What is Our Socialistic Pattern?

H. M. Patel

WHAT is it that we mean by a socialistic pattern in India? The term socialism means different things to different persons. All through the ages, we have had expositions and professions of socialism which are often as different from each other as chalk from cheese. It is, therefore, important to ask explicitly: "What is the precise significance we attach to the phrases socialistic pattern in India?"

Perhaps, the best way in which I might attempt an answer to this question would be to tell you about the manner in which we are tackling some of the concrete economic problems in India—problems of land reform and of the promotion and control of industries, of taxation and credit facilities and so on.

The words—'a socialistic pattern of society', as we understand them in India should not be regarded as an echo of some set doctrines of social evolution or in attempt to copy any set pattern evolved elsewhere. The Indian approach to economic policy is essentially pragmatic—an approach which proceeds from our own needs and traditions, leaving room for experimentation and adaptation in the light of changing circumstances.

No rigid doctrine of social evolution-Marxist or otherwise—can fit all the acts in a fast changing world, and each country has to work out its salvation according to its own lights. Neither do we in India believe in the inevitability of conflict between groups or classes.

Traditions of India

The traditions of India, so nobly expounded by Mahatma Gandhi in recent times, are those of a peaceful and non-violent approach to all problems. This is not to say that we are unmindful of the conflicts and divisions which must inevitably arise from time to time in any living organism. A non-violent approach postulates nevertheless that a harmony achieved through peaceful and democratic means constitutes the only abiding strength for all societies.

Violent revolutions which seek to end all conflict and injustice for all times only succeed, in unleashing new conflicts and new inequalities.

Flowing pictures of Utopia—perfections which would be reached swiftly and which would perpetuate themselves for ever—are but a mirage and a snare. The words 'socialistic pattern of society' are chosen, therefore, deliberately in India—not socialism or any other 'ism' signifying a rigid and static picture of society, but a changing pattern in which certain values will be kept uppermost nevertheless. These values, apart from social and economic justice, greater equality and orderly progress, include regard for individual freedom and insistence on a peaceful solution of all problems along democratic lines.

Let me quote some of the provisions of the Constitution of India which the people gave themselves in November 1949. The socialistic pattern of society is only a more concretised version of the approach to social and economic policy embodied in the Constitution. The Constitution of India, in its preamble, declares that it aims at securing for all its citizens.

> "Justice, social, economic and political;
> Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship;
> Fraternity, assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation."

You will notice the emphasis on fraternity and liberty—the latter which is also understood in the Constitution by guaranteeing certain fundamental rights to the citizens, including the right to private property and adequate compensation in the event of appropriation by the State. The Constitution also lays down certain Directive Principles of State's Policy which require, among other things, that the "State shall, in particular, direct its policy towards securing:

(a) that the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood;
(b) that the ownership and control of the material resources of the community are so distributed as best to subserve the common good; and
(c) that the operation of the economic system does not result in concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment."

Legitimate Questions

Some of you may ask: "Is this all there is to the Indian concept of a socialistic pattern? If the objective of economic policy is simply to raise living standards and promote greater equality of incomes, wealth and opportunity, what is particularly socialistic about it?"

After all, the basic principle of socialism is that all means of production should be owned by the State and most—if not all—economic activity should be centralised in the hands of the State. It is or is it not the intention in India to abolish all private property ultimately by gradual extension of the activities of the State?

These are legitimate questions. After all, the most basic question that comes to mind when we speak of any economic order—socialistic, individualistic or capitalistic—is that of the role and functions of the State in the economic sphere. The acceptance of a socialistic pattern of society in India does imply the judgement that it is desirable, in the present circumstances, for the State to extend its activities in the economic sphere. But it does not imply an embargo on the development of private initiative or enterprise.

Still less does it imply a determination to create eventually a monolithic State with complete control over all economic activity. Indeed, in a democratic State, it would be somewhat of an impertinence for the present generation to lay down the shape of things to come several decades from now. There is no society which relies entirely either on State initiative or on private initiative.

The balance to be struck between the two so as to achieve the optimum combination of economic progress and economic equality is something which each generation has to work out in the light of its own experience. The socialistic pattern in India does not mean a policy of nationalisation for the sake of nationalisation. It certainly carries no implication of a policy of confiscation.

The acceptance of a socialistic pattern does imply the judgement that, in the present circumstances, an extension of the economic activities of the State is both necessary and desirable. How far should this extension go is clearly a matter for determination against the background of the totality of conditions in India. And it will help you in appreciating our approach briefly to three things which must be borne in mind in judging the scope of the economic activities of the State in India.

Role of State

First of all, the State at present in India plays only a minor role in the economic sphere in comparison with other countries.—including U.K., U.S.A., and France. Under the British rule, the functions of the State were construed primarily as those of maintaining law and order. Economic matters were left, by and large, to be governed by a policy of *laissez faire*. The result is that for a considerable period of time, the extension of the activities of the State in India would mean in practice nothing more than assum-

ing responsibility for functions which are already a part of the accepted scheme of things in all modern societies.

The responsibility of the State for research, education, health, social security and for providing a sound system of credit, public utilities and so on, all these are only in a rudimentary state in India. It is no accident that Government revenue amounts to a little more than seven per cent of national income in India—one of the lowest proportions in the world as against between 20 and 30 per cent in most European countries and about one-sixth of total national income in the U.S.

Perhaps, the most socialistic of all policies is the policy of providing free and compulsory education upto a certain minimum to all children. In India, only half of the children in the age group 6 to 11 and less than one-fifth of the children in the age group 11 to 14 attend school at present. Indian Socialism, therefore, has a long way to travel before it becomes as socialistic as most modern societies.

My second point relates to the fact that an extension of the public sector does not mean necessarily a curtailment of private initiative. Indeed, for the vast majority of the people in India who live in villages under conditions of ignorance, filth and poverty, a great deal of assistance and initiative by the State are essential precondition for development of any spirit of enterprise in them. The socialistic pattern of society, in other words is not directed against private enterprise as such. On the contrary, it seeks to create conditions whereby the area of genuine enterprise and initiative, is progressively enlarged.

Rapid Progress

My third point is that the accent of the socialistic pattern in India is on rapid progress. The pressure of increasing population is very great, and if any marked improvement in the standard of living of the mass of the people is to be achieved, it is essential that the increase in our productivity should be at a markedly faster rate. Because of this need for speed, the State must necessarily play a greater role in the development of the country's economy.

But it also implies that there is ample scope in India for both the public and the private sectors to grow. Let me re-emphasise; the fundamental need of the Indian economy clearly is that of a rapid increase in production and productivity and it is precisely in order to facilitate the process of rapid progress that an increase in the activities of the State is envisaged. Where the economic horizon is expanding continuously, there need be no fear that the extension of the public sector would be at the expense of the private sector.

In the matter of economic equality also, the basic approach is to strengthen incomes and opportunities at the lower level rather than to level down the tall poppies. A mere redistribution of existing income and wealth would make no essential difference to the people. It would merely mean the distribution of poverty. What is envisaged in a socialistic pattern in India is a process of growth in a manner which is not only orderly, peaceful and democratic but it is also consistent with the dictates of social justice as well.

Courtesy: A.I.R. Delhi

PANCHAYATS IN ANCIENT INDIA

THE PANCHAYATS were in existence as early as the *Vedic* Age. The word *gramini* is referred to in the *Vedas*. It means the leader of the village. There is a reference to *Janapadas* in Valmiki's *Ramayana*, which were a kind of federation of village republics. We read of *gram sanghas* in the *Mahabharata* and the *Manusmriti*. *Gram sabhas* are mentioned in the Buddhist *Jatakas*. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* and the Shukracharya's *Nitisar* give a long account of the rural communities. Reference to the panchayats are found in the *Shrutis* and *Smritis* also and to *Gana* and *Puga* in the *Dharmasutras*. The latter refer to the village and town corporations of the olden days. The *panchayat* rule was in existence even during the times of the Mauryas (322 to 185 B.C.). As a matter of fact, the *gaon sabhas* continued to flourish till the English appeared on the Indian scene.

ONLY THE DOGS GREETED US

T. R. Sharma, Social Education Organiser, C.D. Block, Paonta (H.P.)

TWO YEARS have elapsed. I remember the cold and misty evening when after days hard tour, I accompanied by the Gram Sevak, reached village Heerpur. The eastern horizon was smiling with the setting sun. Everything appeared to be jubilant and happy in its natural setting. Men and women, young and the old, all were busy with their tasks. Suddenly, I marked a great change. Our appearance put the women and the children into stampede. They ran away and got refuge in their cottages. Men working in the cattle-sheds neglected our arrival. However, we were greeted warmly by a couple of barking dogs. It was a sort of bugle alarming the village about the entrance of strangers. We were standing quietly and firmly awaiting the next move. Suddenly an octogenarian, named Ram Saran appeared before us. His lustreless eyes, hollowed cheeks and the face full of wrinkles told the story of the past 80 years.

Curiously, he asked, "Who are you"? We exchanged greetings. We answered his question politely. He directed us to the *Chaupal* and promised to meet us along with his brethren at night. At about 9.0 P.M. all the villagers assembled in the Chaupal. I had a chit-chat with the villagers for some time. I tried to find out their felt needs. Later, I gave a song followed by a talk on the aims and objectives of Community Project Scheme. I referred to their felt need only. Thus I was able to create interest among them. They gave a patient hearing. In the end, they put me many questions to clarify their doubts. I answered every question politely and fearlessly.

Since then, Heerpur, a centre of hardships and difficulties, came under the impact of Community Project. As a result, the village link road was improved. A model well was constructed. An Adult Literacy Centre and a Tailoring Centre for ladies were started. A Young Farmers' club was organised and a recreation centre building is under construction. They have started using chemical fertilizers and improved seeds. Now, I see enthusiasm in the weary limbs and witness smiles on the sweated faces.

Recently, I went to that village at night. In the pitch dark courtyard, an old voice asked, "Who are you"? I answered, "A stranger, please". Recognising me, he responded, "Angel not stranger". He embraced me with love and affection.

THAT OLD WOMAN OF NINETY

THE COMMUNITY PROJECT and N.E.S. programmes are the nerve centres for the awakening of Rural India. They are in fact modern India's centres of pilgrimage.

But when I recollect my days at the training centre three years ago, I never dreamt that I would be a successful extension worker.

"Extension" classes used to be held by our Principal. It was the most interesting period and the whole class used to be very attentive. We never felt the long hours. I decided to adopt "Extension Method" at every step in my practical training.

Within a fortnight, we were in a village with a population of about 50 families. Myself and my co-workers were determined to fight against poverty, disease and illiteracy. Every morning, we used to recite the Extension *Mantram* that to be successful "a real Gram Sevak will use the first needs of the village as the material to work with technical skill and ability as his defence and extension as his way of life."

We made personal contacts with the individual farmers. We discussed various subjects. They heard us patiently, but it had hardly any effect. We spent days and nights in finding out the reason for our failure, and I used to argue with my co-worker that "Extension Method" was only good in theory, but not practicable. At last we realised that we had not yet spotted out the real leader of the village.

We hitched upon the village patel, and the leading landlord. But to our disappointment none of them could acquit himself well as a real leader, as they were disliked by one section of the village or the other for one reason or other. At last we were desperate. We were unable to express our feelings to anybody except one old woman, Ningavva—a widow. She had a particular reason to be affectionate to us, as she had lost all her sons. She lived alone, in a big house. My co-worker and myself used to spend evenings with her as we respected her as our own grand mother.

We told her that we would leave the village, as we failed in our attempts to execute development works. She simply sobbed and after a minute with pride assured us that she would do her best in this respect. Next evening, we went to her home as usual. But to our wonder, we found some of the important villagers in her home. Even the most conservative villagers were there. The moment, we entered her home, they all surrounded us and begged to be excused. They expressed their determination to join hands in all our day-to-day programmes. We could say nothing except shedding tears of joy.

By the end of the month, we were able to lay our demonstration plots. We organised Community labour work every Monday and weekly Bhajans every Saturday.

The mothers and sisters of the village cooperated with us in our soap making and smokeless *chulla* programmes.

I can never forget that old lady of 90 who made extension worker out of me. *(T. S. Srinivasa Iyenger, Gram Sevak, Koppa-Kadu, Mysore State.)*

HAMARA DESH

ANONYMOUS MONEY ORDER

A POSTMAN turned up last week at the office of the Union Railway Minister, Shri Jagjivan Ram, with a money order for Rs. 5 from a person who described himself merely as "anonymous". An equally mysterious note received by the Minister from the "anonymous" person said that the sum represented the amount due to the Railway because he had "now and then" travelled without ticket. Another person sent the Minister a money order for Rs. 2 as freight due from him to the Railways. The sender of money order gave his full address in the Muzaffarpur district of Bihar.

SPINNING BY TEACHERS

PRIMARY SCHOOL teachers in Hyderabad have taken to spinning, during summer vacation to supplement their income. Thirty teachers are at present being trained in the use of Ambar Charkha by the Hyderabad Khadi Samiti. These teachers would be able to earn a minimum of Rs. 20 a month by utilising their spare time for spinning. The Samiti expects to expand the scheme to other States in the country if it proves a success. It is also proposed to continue the training programme after school hours throughout the year so as to help as many teachers as possible.

NO LECTURE ABOUT FAULTS, PLEASE

SHRI NEHRU told the Development Commissioners' Conference that it was not always easy to speak strong language to the people and "carry it off". He advised officers not to indulge in moralizing while dealing with rural people and said: "I have often not hesitated to speak in a strong language to large audiences but I have carried it off because in spite of my strong language I always felt friendly and affectionate to them and the people realised it and had faith in my 'bona-fides'.

"You cannot win them over by lecturing about their faults."

THEY WALKED ON FIRE

DEVOTEES WATCHED IN awe as priests belonging to the 'Kurubara' community broke cocoanuts on their heads and walked on fire at a religious ritual at Bangalore.

The ritual which was dedicated to Sree Beereswaro, the community's principal deity, came off after an interval of 48 years, the last having taken place in 1909.

The priests, who went into a trance towards the close of the ceremony, smashed to pieces nearly 50 cocoanuts on their heads without sustaining any visible injury to their skulls. The occasion was 'Jatra' of the deity in which processions were taken out from a local Beereswaro temple. The ritual was accompanied by chanting of mantras. Kurubaras are a backward Hindu community in Mysore State.

30,000 MARRIAGES IN A DAY

NEARLY 30,000 marriages were solemnized in one day in Jodhpur division. It was on Friday—Akha Teej (beginning of sowing operations in Marwar) considered to be the most auspicious time for marriages in this part of India. In some cases the bridegrooms and the brides were aged between 2 and 13 years. In some villages infants were carried by their mothers.

At Rajkot village in Nagaur tehsil, 11 daughters of a family were given away in marriage for economic reasons.

KODAI SEMINAR

AN Inter-State Seminar on Community Development was held at Kodaikanal last month. Kodaikanal is a hill-station of the south, about 7,000 ft. above sea-level. It has the usual bracing cool climate and beautiful scenes of hills, forests, lakes and valleys of a hill-station.

The Seminar discussed six items of the programme. While considering "women's programme" it was found that very little had been done so far. Two concrete suggestions that emerged were that emphasis should be laid on Home Improvement and that Gram Sevikas should be available in larger numbers right from National Extension Service Stage and even in post-intensive stage for working in the Blocks.

In the matter of Village Industries, emphasis was again laid on starting from the consumption end. We ought to have Consumption Surveys and find out scope for local consumption as well as for export. Then we should do a survey of production, availability of raw materials, need to develop skills and expand production. More attention should be paid to publicity and production of a new pattern of goods. The most profitable line of approach will be to maximise consumption of village industries products in the Block area. The Block staff should set an example by using as much of local products as possible in their own homes. Similarly members of Village Panchayats and other village leaders should give a lead in this matter.

While discussing Health programmes training of Health personnel took up most of the time—and rightly too. Emphasis was also laid on the Block staff paying more attention to comparatively non-technical items like (a) Smokeless Chulas, (b) family latrines, (c) urinals in schools, (d) Soakage pits, (e) compost pits, and (f) re-vaccination for small pox. Present coverage is admittedly poor everywhere. Block staff should campaign for a 100 per cent coverage for these items in each village. Here again, the Block staff should set an example by having these items in their own houses and members of village Panchayats and other village leaders should be persuaded to set an example.

Agricultural programme was the next item. Emphasis was laid on securing more co-operation and participation from cultivators. The need to prepare Village plans for increasing agricultural production in consultation with village leaders was stressed. More group action, through village Panchayats, Co-operative societies and Farmers' association, is necessary for quicker introduction of improved agricultural practices and for making available in time adequate supplies of seed, fertilisers and insecticides. Youth clubs and Mahila Mandal must be interested more in the agricultural programme. More use should be made of the device of Demonstration for introducing improved methods. It is necessary to pay more attention to training of village leaders in Extension programmes and Extension methods.

Tribal Welfare and Gramdan were also discussed.

This is poultry farming, Mummy. Brother has taught me!

(Cartoon by a Gram Sevak)

Health Education in Rural Areas-II

R. N. Basu

AN analysis of different health education methods in the villages can now be made.

1. *Personal advice*: The advice is most effective when an individual comes with a problem for solution, such as medical consultation. Personal talk is of value from the point of view of education, when it is given during any health services. During the D.D.T. spray of a house, the Malaria Inspector may say a few words about the measures to be taken to combat Malaria.

2. *Lectures*: Lectures are useful in disseminating information to a large number of people. It will be useless if it is given in market or any other place where the people are not in a mood to hear any health talk. It may profitably be given before any film show, during health exhibition, among the school children or in a meeting arranged by local clubs. The speech should be simple and should not continue for more than ten minutes as villagers' attention cannot be retained more than that, at a time. The speaker should not deal with too many points but give stress on a few items only.

3. *Group Discussion*: The group conference process can be effectively used in adult education. The group may consist of a variable number of people from five to fifteen who have come together. Such groups as village Health Committee, Health Advisory Committee, Trained Hygiene Teachers' Association, Teachers' Associations, Clinic mothers group, Youth Clubs, may be utilised. The health personnel may participate in the discussion only to give helpful comments and technical advice. The chairman should be elected from among the villagers. Topics of common interest may be selected and freely discussed. It enables each member of the group to talk and hear. The group discussion provides strength and security for each member to take the consquences of changing customary patterns of behaviour.

4. *Radio*: There are very few radios in the villages. Even if the community radios are arranged by the State Government it may not be very useful as health education media unless the programmes are arranged as to suit villager's understanding and leisure.

5. *Books, pamphlets, leaflets, etc.*: As most of the villagers cannot read, the written words are of no use here. Attractively presented, leaflets can be distributed after a group discussion or personal contact to follow and reinforce advice given orally. But they are of limited value.

6. *Posters*: The principal object of the posters should be to attract attention rapidly to single word or idea. The posters, before use, should be tested on people of the type for whom it is intended and their comments noted. Any corrections or modifications neces-

sary for presentation of clear idea have to be made. The posters have to be displayed in all important places and should be changed frequently to arrest attention. The posters and charts may be arranged in a narrative order either to tell a story or pose a problem for discussion.

7. *Magic lantern*: At the present moment, though the villagers are interested to see movie pictures, magic lantern slide demonstration has got a great role to play in health education work. The slides can be prepared in relation to local conditions. A discussion can be started after each slide demonstration. The machine is comparatively cheap and easy to handle.

8. *Flannelgraph*: The flannelgraph is a very useful aid in the rural area. The materials for education can be easily prepared at low cost and it is easy to carry. The attention of the audience can be attracted and held up and they can participate in the discussion.

9. *Motion Pictures*: The equipments are very costly to maintain and it is difficult, sometimes impossible to take it into the interior of the village due to bad roads. The films can rarely be produced to suit a specific audience or demand. Moreover the villagers take the cinema show as a source of entertainment. If a talk is given on the subject of show before it starts and questions are asked after the show, to ascertain their learning, some of the information may be retained by the audience.

10. *Health Exhibition*: Health exhibitions attract large number of villagers. Thus the villagers get an opportunity to come in contact with a variety of new ideas on health matters. Moreover this provides an occasion for the health department to demonstrate their different activities. Exhibits should be self-explanatory and at the same time spectacular. To make the exhibition a success, local people should take part in organisation and assume some responsibility. Young educated villagers can be trained to demonstrate particular exhibits and used as volunteers.

11. *Health Competition*: Competition method serves a valuable purpose. A prize may be awarded to school students, who are most neat and clean and best in regard to personal hygiene. Competition on best physique among the youths may be organised. Baby shows create enthusiasm among the mothers.

There are many organized methods of educating villagers in health matter, any one or more of which may be conveniently utilised at any one time or at different times, alone or in combination. No hard and fast rule or definite direction can be laid for application of any particular methods. One has to use his intelligence to utilise the available resources for health education and it should be remembered that success depends on the man behind the method. Special emphasis should be given on health education in the schools. School children of today are the citizens of tomorrow and they should be ideally prepared for adulthood. It is also believed that the school child will act as an ambassador of health for the whole family.

Most of the people in our country die from communicable diseases and that is due to lack of scientific knowledge regarding prevention of those diseases. With the spread of education, it can be expected that people can be saved from preventable diseases and they can be made physically strong, mentally sound and socially reasonable.

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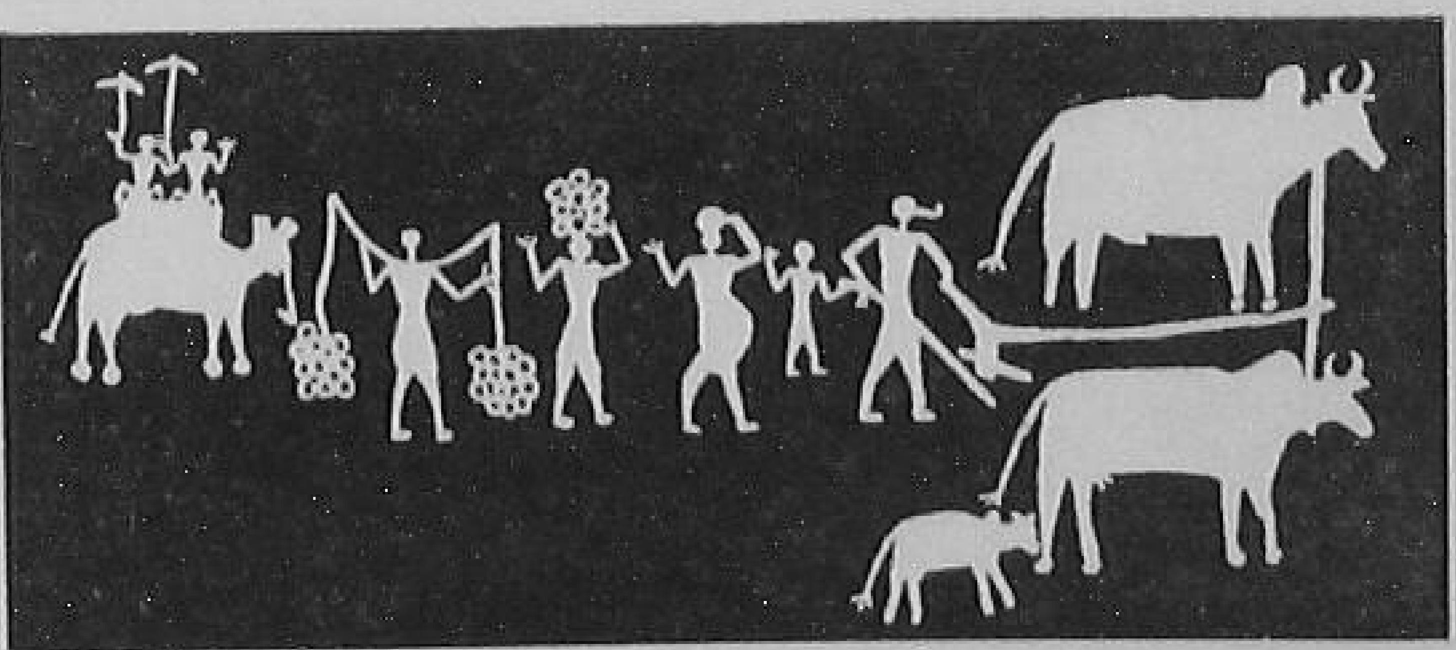

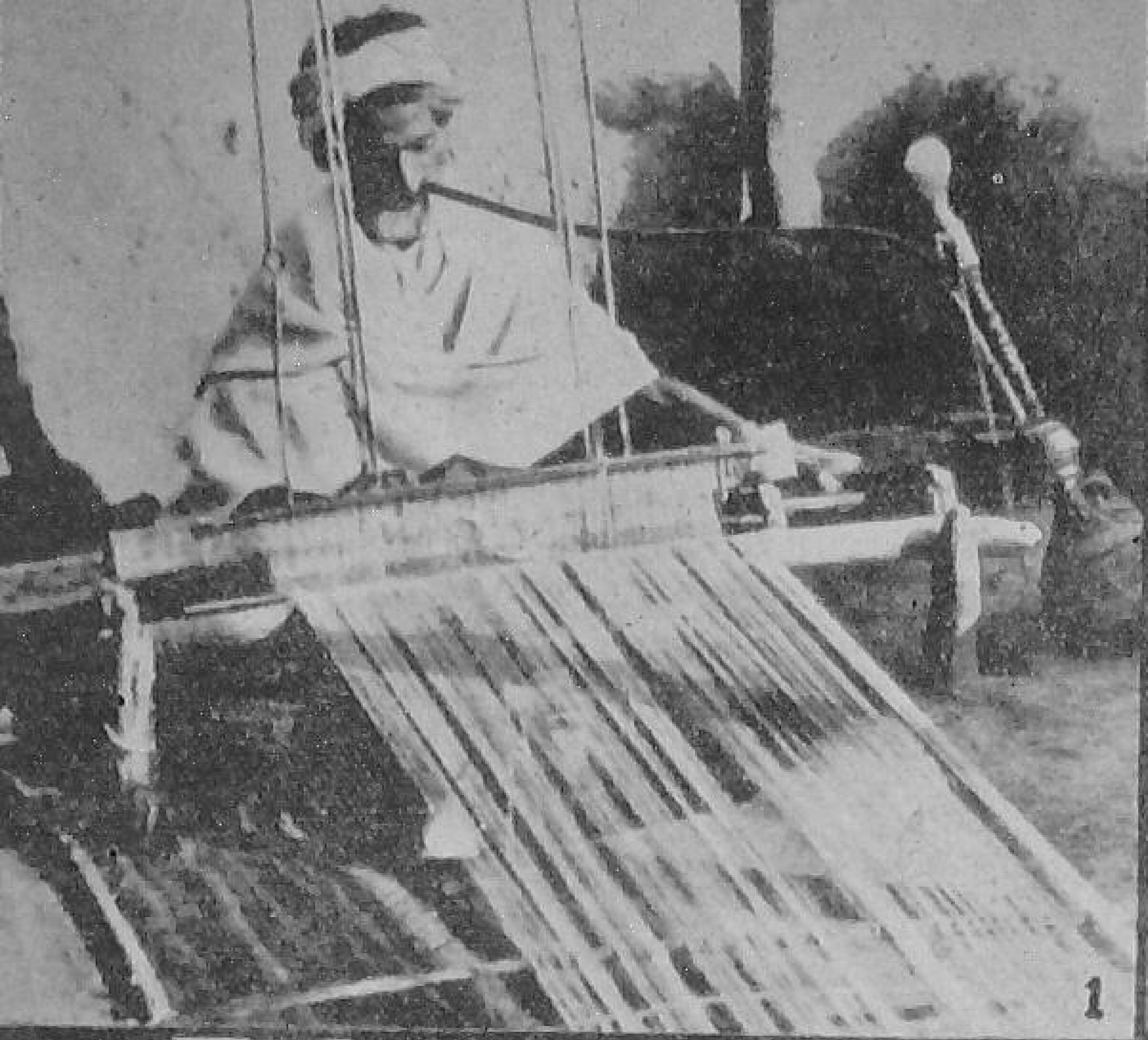

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES

VILLAGE INDUSTRIES form one of the most important facet of our programme. The primary object of developing small industries in rural areas is to extend work opportunities, raise incomes and standard of living. A sum of Rs. 200 crore has been earmarked in the Second Five Year Plan for the development of village and small-scale industries.

Above are a few pictures of our village industries. Photograph No. 1 shows a traditional weaver busy at his loom. Photograph No. 2 shows a demonstration of extraction of Ghani oil. Picture No. 3 shows potters at work while in picture No. 4 a Bombay village woman is making fruit baskets.

Health Education

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Meeting the People

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ANDYA

Shramdan

Prayer

EQUIPPING CITIZENS OF TOMORROW

Children form the backbone of a nation. They will be the citizens of tomorrow. The Community Development programme, therefore, lays great emphasis on preparing children as good citizens. Attempts are being made to organize Bal Sabhas, Sishu Vihars, etc., in all villages covered by the Community Development programme. Children's parks have been laid in most of the villages.

The above photograph shows a group of children being taught a game by a Gram Sevika.

THOUGHTS ON COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

P. S. Patel, Gramsevak,
C.D. Blocks, Dehgam,
Dist.: Ahmedabad.

INDIA entered the fifth year of community development programme on 2nd October 1956. Four years of our programme have clearly shown that the people have been taking interest more and more and gradually they have realised that it is the programme of the people, for the people and by the people. If our development programme is to succeed, people should plan their problems, chalk out the schemes, methods of work and put them into practice. In a people's programme it is essential to consider the role of every unit of society. When we are concentrating our efforts for an all round development of society, we must think of its smallest unit i.e. individual man, woman and child in terms of community development.

There are social groups and organisations. They work for different aims and interests for the common good of the society. Besides social organisations there are village institutions such as village-panchayats and co-operatives round which the village-community is woven for the concentrated activities of our programme. If our programme is to mean a people's programme, we should see in what way the popular participation in community programme can be more intensive. For this, we shall have to study the role of different social groups, social organisations and village-institutions in community development programme.

Children

Like men and women, children can also participate in our programme. We have about three crore of school-going children. Children of the primary schools are a big force. They can do effective work under good leadership. Children can undertake the sanitation work, say once a week. Through this the children will not only learn the spirit of social service, but they will inspire others. Children are always in front in social functions, in processions and they play an important role in our programme.

Youth

Next to the children, are the youths. Their participation in the programme can bring desired change. They have the talent for constructive work. Only thing to attract them is personal contact. This age is under the influence of the fast changing world. They can, therefore, be easily tapped in the programme. Any experiment of social welfare activities if operated through them, is sure to be successful. They should be attracted, organised and trained to work in the field of community development.

Students

High-school and college-students during holidays may encamp in community projects and National Extension Service block areas. They should have a definite programme of social education, manual labour, road-repair, sanitation, etc. This type of camp will inspire village people to participate in the programme. Besides, such camps will bridge and wipe out the gulf between the literate and the illiterate.

Women

Rural women had for long been confined to the four walls of the house. If our men participate in the programme, women should not remain out of the picture. Women have equal role to play in our society. Women are a potential source of strength. Important items of women welfare programme are the removal of illiteracy and purdha system. If these two things are removed, they will soon come forward and actively participate in the programme. For this purpose, we require a number of women social workers to organise women welfare activities and to provide training in simple home economics, child welfare, sewing, weaving, basket-making and in many other cottage-industries.

Family

Family is the basic unit of society. It has an important role in the process of transforming a society. We should give much importance to the family. In fact, our programme of planning should begin from the "family" unit. Survey of each family should be carried out. The work should be undertaken by social organisations.

Social Organisations

Individuals unite together and form associations when they have common interest. They are: Children's Clubs, Yuvak mandals, Farmers' Clubs, Bhajan-mandals, Mahila-mandals, Vikas-mandals and others. These social organisations work for the common good of each other and promote the spirit of social service among the members. These organisations lack leadership. If the Government imparts necessary training to the primary school teachers and entrust them with social welfare activities, these social organisations will play a dynamic role in our programme.

Village Panchayat

Village-panchayat is the symbol of democracy. It has the most vital role to play in our programme. If rural India is to be revolutionised, we shall have to work hard for the expansion and growth of this people's institution.

If the village-panchayat is to function like a small democracy, we shall have to appoint a full-time secretary trained in panchayat laws. The members of the village-panchayat sometimes do not know their duties and responsibilities. Government may reserve the rights of appointing a few able men of the village as nominated members for the efficient and smooth working of the village panchayat. The village-panchayats do not have adequate funds. It is necessary to increase their resources. If the village panchayat works well, more and more powers may be vested in them. Thus, they can develop and undertake the village administration. Rural India will survive, revive and reconstruct only through this age-long old institution.

Co-operatives

Co-operative Society is another important village-institution. We have seen that wonderful works are done when hands unite and undertake a co-operative endeavour. Co-operatives do not function efficiently at the village-level. This is due to the fact that the members do not have adequate knowledge of the functions of a co-operative. There is no full-time secretary to help, guide and run the co-operative society. The members of the co-operative societies are generally illiterate. If the co-operative movement is to be strengthened at the village-level, Government should appoint a group secretary trained in co-operative functions. Unless this is done, the co-operatives would not work well. The movement may be seriously handicapped.

Co-operative movement has the most important role to play in the community development programme. Every village should have a multi-purpose society. Where this is not possible, it may be formed in a group of villages. Once this has been done, every member in the village should be made the member of the co-operative society. It is through the co-operative movement, that members will learn the principles of brotherhood and co-operation.

INDIRECT APPROACH

ADDRESSING THE 6th Development Commissioners' Conference at Mussoorie, Shri Nehru said indulging in sermons took one nowhere. Shri Nehru, who was referring to widow remarriage, said while he was studying at Cambridge an enthusiastic worker rushed to the students and asked them to sign a pledge that they would marry only widows. He said he did not sign the pledge because it hardly provided a solution to the social evils of Indian society. Shri Nehru emphasized that an indirect approach to problems was more beneficial than a direct one.

ROLE OF GRAM SEVAKS

We reproduce below extracts pertaining to the role of Gram Sevaks in the Community Development Programme from the summary of the Fourth Evaluation Report.

THE need for more precise and adequate definition of the role and functions of the Gram Sevak was emphasized in the last Evaluation Report. This need has become even more urgent as a result of developments during the current year. So long as the projects were spending large sums of money on various types of construction works, these works occupied most of the time of the Gram Sevak. But with the sharp fall in construction activity in the post-intensive phase, this part of the Gram Sevak's work has been greatly reduced. Reports have come from a number of evaluation centres that the Gram Sevaks do not have much work and spend a considerable proportion of their time at block headquarters; that they do not visit villages, and even when they do, confine their contacts to a few people whom they know well. It is also reported that some of them are getting more 'official' in their behaviour and expect the villagers to come to their 'offices' for their requirements. It must be remembered however that the Gram Sevak now has much less patronage at his disposal. It will also take time for him to get adjusted to his new—and what he probably regards as his less important—position.

In a country like India, no extension worker can hope to get the confidence of the rural people unless he attends to what the villagers feel are their most immediate needs and unless he makes himself useful to them in the manner in which they want. It was really therefore a matter of good fortune from the point of view of the eventual success of the C.D. and N.E.S. programme that the project staff had at their disposal ample funds for both construction and irrigational work and the Gram Sevak was able not only to disburse funds for satisfying the felt needs of the people but also secure for them supplies and credit without which they would not have been able to effect any improvement in their material conditions. It is this activity of his—and one that did not really fit in with the strictly orthodox view of the Gram Sevak's role—that broke down the barrier between Government and the people. Any abrupt termination of this part of the Gram Sevak's activities would not be desirable.

Moreover, it is a fact that the villager has a number of needs for which he wants immediate action, and expects his government to assist him in the satisfaction of these needs. He expects that somebody at the village level should do this. So long as the local village panchayat and the local cooperative society are not well organised and so long as the normal development departments of government have not created the physical and technical research stations and the like, easily accessible to the villager and readily available within his resources, somebody has to fill the vacuum. It may be unfortunate that the Gram Sevak has to do so, but it is an inevitable product of the comparatively backward stage the country occupies today in the field of economic development. It is vitally important, therefore, that the transition in the role of the Gram Sevak from the C.D. to the N.E.S. pattern should take place by gradual stages and alongside the filling up of the economic and physical gaps in the countryside. The implications of this proposition should be considered in all its bearings before undertaking a wholesale programme of conversion of C.D. into P.I.P. blocks and sticking to the present pattern of the P.I.P. both in terms of its functions and its budget provisions.

If the objective indicated by the Planning Commission, viz. that the Gram Sevak should establish contact with every individual family in his area and help to plan its production programme is to be fulfilled, there must be a substantial reduction in the area and population allotted to him for this purpose.

A Village with A Difference

KALAMBA is a tiny village of 120 hutments with a population of 650 in the Community Development Block of Mangrulpur. It has set an example to other villages in the matter of eradication of backwardness and poverty. More than 75 per cent of the cultivable lands of this village are owned by absentee landlords. Most of the land is rocky and arid with no irrigation facilities.

One day the villagers met in a conference and adopted six objectives to eliminate all obstacles in the way of their progress. They took a vow to fulfil all the objectives with stubborn determination and to march forward with the other advanced villages around it.

The six objectives were: (1) total prohibition, (2) elimination of extravagant expenses on social or religious functions traditionally observed in the village, (3) removal of unlawful encroachments in order to widen roads, (4) Improvement of sanitation, (5) organisation of a Kalapathak for cultural advancement, and (6) construction of a mile-long approach road and a tank to end age-long hardships in respect of communications and water.

Relying on self-help and their own manual labour, the villagers took up these objectives one by one. They worked collectively and by organising labour groups. They introduced prohibition by taking a holy oath not to allow any one to possess, distil, sell or consume liquor. They organised prohibition squads and eliminated the evil of drink. They formed committees to check extravagant expenditure on religious or social occasions even under social duress. They organised a voluntary labour camp to remove all encroachments and freed the village site from all filth and garbage.

The success achieved by them in these fields encouraged them to take up construction of a mile-long approach road and a village tank. Within a fortnight they constructed the road and completed the earth-work valued at Rs. 8,000.

The young boys and girls of the village organised a Kalapathak to develop and utilise their latent talents in fine arts and folk dances.

Thus, within three months of community living, Kalamba underwent literally a great transformation and emerged as one of the best planned villages in the Community Development Blocks in the State.

IN DUE COURSE

"BOYS WHO do badly and prove incurable are, as a rule, expelled from institutions to which they belong if the institutions have any character at all.. More injury has been done to the cause of India since August 15, 1947, through the use of the expression "In due course" than through any other single factor we know of.

Community Development was born an upstart child following the landslide that signified our freedom from foreign rule and our determination to stake our all to fill the gaps that grew over centuries of our misdeeds as a people. Ministry of Community Development and the expression "In due course" exclude each other, naturally." (Office Order issued by the Minister of Community Development.)

THE PROBLEM OF THE SCREW

DURING the last war, Britain, U.S.A. and Canada met in conference to decide on a uniform system for screws. It had become a problem to deal with replacements and repairs of defective equipment because the screw threads of the Allied countries varied. For instance, a British vehicle could not be repaired in the U.S. Workshop. The Unified Screw Thread System was evolved.

A similar realisation of the value of a uniform system on the part of the trade led to a resolution adopted by nearly 1,000 delegates of the International Chamber of Commerce in 1939. It said, "the introduction of a uniform system in all countries should undoubtedly obviate much of the vexations and superfluous calculations. A large majority of nations having adopted the decimal metric system of weights and measures, it is highly desirable that all other countries follow suit".

The main advantage of the metric system is its capacity for speed and accuracy both in regard to design and manufacture. In India, the value of the metric system has been anticipated in some of the new industries in the public sector. The Bharat Electronics, The Hindustan Machine Tools Factory, and the Hindustan Shipyard are a few examples.

Ball-bearings and rollers, the most important and widely used machine parts in all industries, are universally standardised only on the metric system. The British Standard Specification gives the same table also in millimetres.

The foot-pound system already employs decimals for measurements below unit, instead of fractions. The technical data are given in tolerances based on decimals. The unit of accuracy is a *thou*, i.e. .001 of a millimetre. Thus the metric system permits of accuracy about 25 times greater than the normal working standards of the foot-pound system (1 inch=25.4 mm.). For comparable accuracy on the foot-pound system, it is necessary to work up to the 6th decimal place which makes calculations cumbersome. It is estimated that in the preparation of drawings and specifications alone, the metric system will result in a saving of 30% of the time in any industrial establishment. In industries, such as the manufacture of sewing machines, type-writers, motors etc., this higher degree of accuracy is of great importance.

Effects of the change

A survey of the implications of the change to the metric system in industry indicates that it would not involve any large-scale purchase of new equipment. The main reason for this is that a machine tool permits of production in the metric system or inch system, irrespective of the system in which it is itself made. Certain small jigs and tools may have to be renewed but these are in any case subject to normal wear and tear and so they can be replaced on the metric system when the next normal replacement becomes due.

Surveys conducted during the last three years have shown the readiness on part of industry in India to change to the metric system. The change-over to the metric system, however, is to be gradually spread during the 10 years period from 1958; the metric system will run concurrently with the inch system for a while.

The working of the two systems side by side would help workers to get themselves gradually familiarised with the new system while the necessary drawings and designs are being drawn up. Manufacturers have expressed the opinion that training of labour is much easier under the metric system than under the inch system.

All About Green Manuring

(Contributed)

CHEMICAL fertilizers have to be used along with organic manures for securing better production. During the First Five Year Plan the consumption of chemical fertilizers has increased much. But we have not succeeded in developing regular use of organic manures. It is, therefore, necessary for us to make a special effort now to produce and use organic manures on a large scale.

Where green manures together with chemical fertilizers have been used year after year on the same field, great improvement in the yield has been achieved over a period of years of such lands being 3 to 4 times the average yield. Our experience shows that a regular addition of even 3 to 4 thousand pounds of green manure, of green leaf is enough when it is used in combination with proper chemical fertilization. When we look for green manures, which yield a higher tonnage the selection of green manure crops naturally becomes limited. This is one of the things which has prevented the adoption of green manuring.

Dhaincha and Sunn-hemp are the two green manure crops. They give a very high yield per acre. The seeds of these two crops are not available in the quantity required; the production of larger quantities of seeds of these crops is not possible because the producer of seed is not sure of the demand. The seeds of these crops cannot be used for any other purpose except green manuring. They are not eaten by men and commonly not fed to cattle. In popularizing Sunn-hemp and Dhaincha, it is necessary to make sure that the production of seed is taken up in each village so that the village can produce its own seed.

Many of the Kharif pulses which are commonly grown in different parts of India can conveniently be used also as green manures, provided the idea of a high tonnage is given up. Crops like Kulthi, Meth (moth), Urid (Kalai), Moong Lobhia (Vigna Katjang Maskalai) can be used as green manures. The seeds are locally available. These crops if sown after the first good shower yield in a period of four to five weeks adequate green matter.

In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, on fallow lands as well as on paddy lands on early crop of Moong is sown with the first shower. The first flush of pods is hand-picked and kept as seed. The vines are immediately ploughed under to serve as green manure. Under such a condition from 10 to 30 seers of Moong seeds are obtained per acre for use next year and some green manure is also added to the field. Here the farmer has only to spend his labour in ploughing the land and no monetary investment is required. In Assam, Bihar and Bengal, with the first shower in April and May, an early maturing variety of groundnut may be sown. The crop may be harvested after 90 to 100 days. Where facilities are available for irrigation, this crop can be sown with the help of irrigation. Such a crop yield from 10 to 12 maunds of groundnuts per acre. The stems or vines are buried under the earth. It serves as a green manure either for paddy or for some other Kharif crop.

In certain parts of Madras, Andhra, Hyderabad and Mysore Til is also used for green manuring.

In Punjab, Pepsu and Bombay, Guar is commonly used as a kharif green manure. This crop also grows on a limited rain-fall. In Kutch between the two rows of irrigated cotton or Bajra or Juar, a row or Guar is sown and the crop is ploughed under when it is about 12 to 15 inches high.

In some areas when paddy attains a height of 9 to 12 inches the field is ploughed up to destroy weeds. In such areas a pulse crop may be sown mixed with paddy. The green manure crop is ploughed in when the field is ploughed up for destroying the weeds.

(To be continued)

FIVE SUGGESTIONS

1. The main object of the National Extension Service Scheme, and Community Development Projects is to change the outlook of the people and have their co-operation. To implement the scheme most successfully and attain tangible results, the co-operation of the village officers is highly desirable. But even now there are some village officers who think too much of their official status. They argue that they are only direct subordinates to the Revenue Inspectors and Tahsildars. To be in touch with them in official routine, I suggest that the Village Level Workers may be permitted to check the cash accounts.

2. They may also be empowered to conduct Ajimaish by giving due training in chain survey for two months.

3. The Village Level Workers are said to be the pillars of the entire programme. But they do not have adequate facilities. The accommodation in the quarters constructed for the Village Level Workers is quite inadequate. He is forced to keep either the demonstration equipment or his bedding in the varandah outside where there is no privacy. An additional room and a compound wall around the yard may be provided.

4. The rural reconstruction work of the Village Level Worker is very important and he has got multifarious difficult duties to attend. He has to conduct practical demonstrations when he requires the assistance of a peon to carry the demonstration equipment, etc. I would therefore suggest that a peon may be given to each Village Level Worker.

5. The designation of the Village Level Workers is misunderstood by the villagers who sometimes think that these Government servants are menials paid from contingencies. Much of our time is to be devoted in enlightening the villagers on this point. As such I would like to suggest that the Village Level Workers may either be designated as "Village Development Organisers" or as "Village Development Instructors". Mere change of designation does not affect the principles of the scheme but adds official status and dignity which facilitates easy performance of duties.

K. L. NARASIMHA RAO
Village Level Worker, Kadiam,
Rajanagaram Community Development
Block, Andhra.

HEARD IN GROUP MEETING

SHRI CHETU RAM of village Mattar related this story in a group meeting of the villagers.

Two years ago, the President of the local Co-operative Society authorised me to draw Rs. 400 from the Bank at the District Headquarters. I went to the bank, knocked at the window of the cashier and presented the authority slip. The cashier asked me to sign the slip. Boldly, I extended my left thumb to put my thumb impression. The cashier hurriedly snatched the paper from my hands. His ferocious brows expressed contempt for I did not know how to sign. "Then go and bring a witness", ordered the cashier. I had no acquaintance in the city. I went from door to door and street to street to look for a witness, but my whole day's efforts went in vain. Having been completely disappointed, I went to a "Babu" and requested him to trace my signatures on the sandy earth. He was kind enough to do so. After a few hours exercise I felt proud of my being well-versed in putting my signature. I rushed to the Bank and said to the cashier, "Babu jee, give me the payment. Here are my signatures". I got the payment and reached home happily.

After relating his story, Shri Chetu Ram exhorted the villagers to make use of the Adult Literacy Centre started in the village under the Community Development Programme.

T. R. Sharma,

Questions & Answers

Q. *Will you kindly let us know to which Department Gram Sevaks are attached and what are their future prospects?*

—R. R. Prasad

A. This is a far-fetched question. You know the Department to which you are attached. You are a part and parcel of the Development Department of your State but you do not have any narrow loyalties. You are a multi-purpose worker. Your role is to bring about all-round development in the village with the help of all the beneficent departments of the State. As regards prospects, you should have no fear. Community Development is going to be a permanent pattern. In fact the Prime Minister declared recently at the Sixth Development Commissioners' Conference at Mussoorie that our ultimate object is to have one Gram Sevak for every village.

Q. *What is your opinion about Gram Sevaks? Are they multi-purpose workers or single-purpose workers?*

—N. Venkatesh Rao

A. We have already stated that Gram Sevak is a multi-purpose worker. The Gram Sevak is there in the village to change the mental outlook of the people and to bring about improvement.

Q. *What is the total number of Gram Sevaks working in the villages?*

—A. Raman

A. According to the latest statistics available, we have in the fields 16,816 V.L.Ws (Extension), 8,106 V.L.Ws (Basic) and 2,115 Group Level Workers.

Q. *How many Gram Sevaks and Gram Sevikas have been promoted as S.E.O., E.O. Agriculture, E.O. Co-operation and B.D.O. in Madhya Pradesh?*

—L. S. Thakur

A. For answer to this question please refer to the "Questions and Answers" column in the April issue of Gram Sevak.

Pen Friends' League

The following is the list of new members of our Pen Friends' League :—

106. *Shri Khaja Husain*—Gram Sevak, NES Metapali PIO, Metapalli Dist. Karimnagar,—H.S.C. —Interested in Rural Uplift and Social Education —Mother Tongue: Urdu.

107. *Shri A. R. Arumugam*—Gram Sevak, Pushpavanam and Post Toppu Murai S. Ry., Vedaranyam Block, Tanjore Dist—S.S.L.C.—Interested in spinning, agriculture, animal husbandry, agriculture exhibitions, plays, social and cultural activities and co-operation—Mother Tongue: Tamil.

108. *Shri Jai Ram Singh—Gram Sevak, Kanihar,* P.O. Kunihar, Distt. Mahasu (H.P.) (NES Block Nunihar)—Matric and Basic Ag.—Interested in Gardening, Sarvodaya and Songs—Mother Tongue: Hindi.

109. *Shri V. K. Datta*—Extension Demonstrator, Extension Wing, Government Agricultural College, Ludhiana—B.Sc. Agriculture—Interested in rural development and world affairs—Mother Tongue: Hindi.

110. *Shri Nisamoni Behera*—V.L.W. Debadihi, P.O. Jharsuguda, Dist. Sambalpur Orissa—I.A.—Interested in Social Education and Music—Mother Tongue: Oriya.

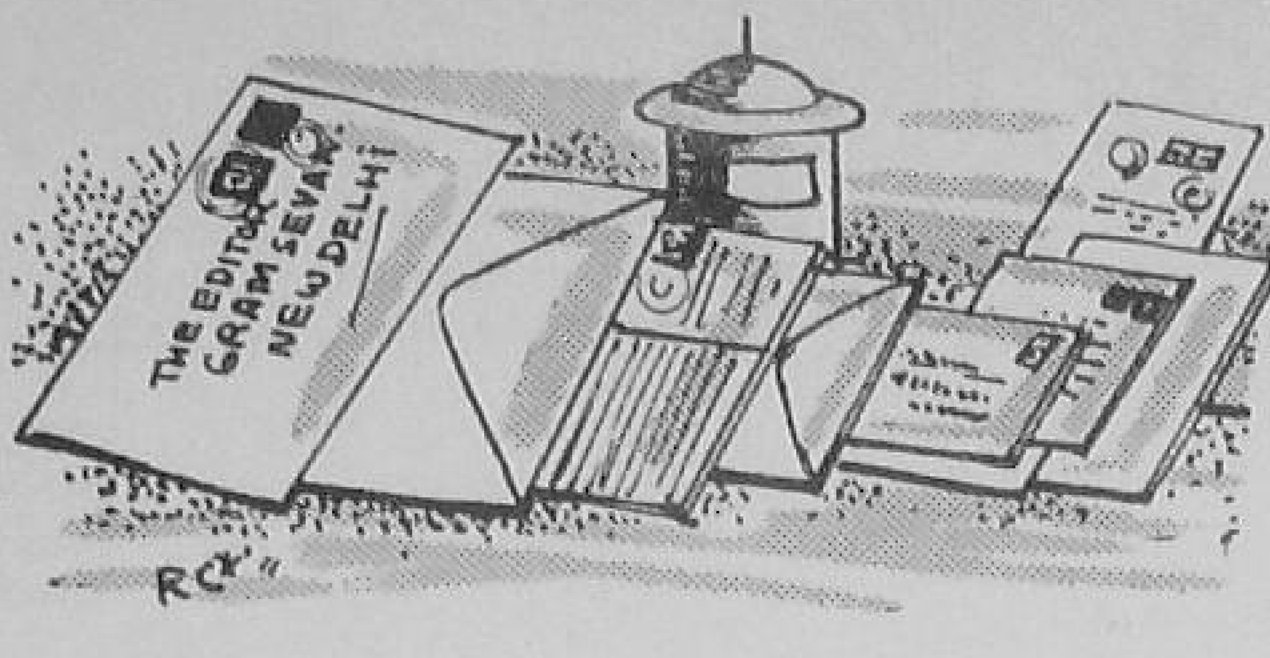
111. *Shri M. Kencha Veerappa*—Gram Sevak, Kamali P.O., Billary Dist. Mysore State—S.S.L.C.—Interested in reading C.P.A. publications, social work, games and music, hard work, love for the people and faithfulness to the job—Mother Tongue: Kannada.

112. *Shri Murari Lal Kaushik*—Gram Sevak, Vikas Nagar NES Block Dungapur (Rajasthan)—Intermediate, Diploma of Agriculture and Extension—Interested in Agriculture, horticulture, demonstration, plant protection and field work, social education, cultural programme, social activities, sports, public health treatment of common disease, veterinary etc.—Mother Tongue: Hindi.

113. *Shri Radheyshyam Gupta*—Gram Sevak, V. & P.O. Manjpur, NES Block Govindgarh, Dist. Alwar—Intermediate (Arts)—Interested in social education, group discussion—lectures and reading newspapers and rural problems—Mother Tongue: Hindi.

114. *Shri Baquer Farzulla*—Gram Sevak, P.O. Sangam, C.P. Block BODHAN (Nizam Sagar)—S.S.L.C. (Matriculation)—Interested in Adult Literacy, social education, group discussion—Mother Tongue: Urdu.

115. *Shri Ram Kulkerni*—Gram Sevak, Village and P.O.; Chapaner, C.D. Block Kannad, Dist., Aurangabad—H.S.C.—Interested in creating true friendship among villagers and officials, improved agricultural practices, singing and flute playing, games—Mother Tongue: Marathi.



READERS WRITE

Sir,

The manufacture of bamboo baskets and other such products, which are widely used in all parts of the country, is an industry left to its fate in crude hands. Families, belong ing to a secular tribe, can be seen at work fabricating their products only in their traditional way. There has so far been no improvement in the technique. Those tribes can be seen throughout the country, where there are jungles and bamboos. They earn their livelihood out of it. Remaining only as a tribal craft, the bamboo industry is in the hands of a few illiterate crude tribal people. Nowhere is there any effort to organise and modernise this industry. For the last two decades, while industrial techniques have generally been revolutionised to multiply and diversify out-put, bamboo industry has no break with practices centuries old. This industry is actually decaying. To give this industry a fillip and to absorb new ideas, it must attract men of outstanding industrial abilities. On a nation-wide scale, this industry should be modernised and run with improved techniques. This will keep the industry intact and improve the welfare of the tribal craftsmen.

V. S. Nambudripad
The Simco, Shoranur Kerala State.

All Hands to Join

Sir,

The Ministry of Community Development issued instructions to all Gram Sevaks to devote 70 to 80 per cent of their time to agriculture, animal husbandry, and co-operation. This has been done with reference to our Prime Minister's wishes.

To achieve this end, it would be desirable not to load Gram Sevaks with all kinds of odd jobs. In fact, all Extension Workers should, in addition to their own duties extend their helping hand to Gram Sevaks. After all, ours is a team work. It is true that the Gram Sevak is the base of the programme. But the base must be strengthened to make the whole super-structure strong. It would be better to train extension workers at block level to give them training in agriculture, co-operation and animal husbandry.

C. S. Tripathi,
Gram Sevak, Kerialjera P.O.
C.D. Block Rahatgarh, Dist. Sagar—M.P.

What of our future ?

Sir,

While we were under training we were given the hope that after 5 years of service as Gram Sevaks, we may expect promotion as Social Education Organisers. Again a S.E.O. could be promoted to the post of a B.D.O. and so on. A Gram Sevak was hopeful that one day he could become a B.D.O., if he worked hard.

But after the reorganisation, the Social Education Organisers have been merged in the Education Department. Appointment of S.E.Os is now done by that Department. Not only that the B.D.O's posts are filled up by other department personnels drawing more than Rs. 150. So a poor Gram Sevak has no future to look forward. I think this rule exists only in Kerala State. May I, therefore, appeal to our Minister, Shri S. K. Dey, to help us in the matter.

Yours etc.,
A Gram Sevak from Malabar.

V.D.O. not Gram Sevak

Sir,

I endorse the suggestion of Shri M. Swaminathan, published in the November issue of *Gram Sevak* that designation Gram Sevak should be changed. It is true that many villagers take Gram Sevak as a menial. We are extension workers. Our designation should be such as would indicate that we are

development workers. Our designation should be in line with B.D.O., S.E.O., etc. Therefore, I suggest that a Gram Sevak be designated as V.D.O. (Village Development Organiser).

Mohd. Khaseem
V.L.W. J. Kalgudi Tungbhadra
Community Project, Raichur (Distt.)

Ambar Charkhas

Sir,

Recently I had a chance to see the working of an Ambar Charkha. I found it to be very useful. By working on an Ambar Charkha an adult can easily earn at least rupee one a day. We the Gram Sevaks must train the landless agricultural labour and other low income population of the villages in the working of Ambar Charkha. We can certainly improve their economic position by this way. Every village must have at least one hundred such Charkhas.

H. S. Rama Rao,
Village Level Worker, P.O. Shahpur,
Distt. Gulbarga C. Rly. Mysore State.

Masonry Wells

Sir,

Subsidy from N.E.S. budget is given for the construction of schools, drinking wells, culvert, etc., with the exception of the masonry well which is the only project of productive value to the cultivators. In dry areas it is of vital importance and even in canal areas it has its own role to play. It keeps the crops alive when the canals fail due to the scarcity of water, provides cultivators with water to grow cash crops at right time, helps them to a very large extent to grow vegetables and fodder and manurial crops, etc. To neglect such an important item under the grant-in-aid scheme, I think, is to neglect thousands of acres of dry land where the digging of the canals or the sinking of the tube wells is not possible.

I suggest that the authorities concerned may consider the point sympathetically and fix up at least 50 per cent subsidy for the construction of the masonry wells.

Mohammad Amin·
Gram Sevak, NES Block, Malwan (UP).

Our Handloom Industry

The handloom industry is one of India's vital cottage industries with its roots deep in antiquity. It provides a livelihood to millions of our people.

* * * *

Varanasi has been famous from time immemorial for its gorgeous silk handloom cloth. Today, with nearly 30,000 handlooms employing about 60,000 weavers, it is the biggest silk weaving centre in India.

* * * *

The immediate problem of the industry is to meet consumer demand and the adjustment of productive machinery to it. The All India Handloom Board has, therefore, planned to set up four designs centres—Bombay, Madras, Varanasi and Calcutta—to evolve new patterns and colour harmonies.

* * * *

Handlooms are primarily engaged in weaving cotton fabrics; quite a few, however, work on silk, art-silk and wooollen fabrics

* * * *

Handlooms in use are of different types—loin looms, throw-shuttle looms, fly-shuttle looms, tape looms, semi-automatic and automatic looms.

* * * *

The handloom industry supplies all the colour-woven saries required in the country.

* * * *

Annual exports of handloom cloth during recent years have ranged between 50 and 65 million yards, valued at between Rs. 5 and 7½ crores.

* * * *

There has been a progressive increase in the production of handloom cloth Production in 1956 was 1,541 million yards as compared with 1,473 million yards in 1955, 1,318 million yards in 1954 and 1,200 million yards in 1953.

* * * *

Literature on Community Development

Sir,

It has often been observed that our literate community especially school and college teachers and taught and others hardly know about our plans and Community Development Programme. Very few bookstalls or booksellers keep literature about Projects and the Plan.

It is therefore humbly suggested that literature on community development be distributed free to the libraries and the reading-rooms. This literature should also be sold on all railway bookstalls. Posters relating to community development should be displayed on the walls of railway stations.

Munilal Ishverdas,
Gram Sevak Trainee,
E.T.C. Junagadh (Bombay)

Pottery is India's most ancient cottage industry. Beautiful pottery has been discovered in 5,000-year old ruins of Mohan-jo-daro, Harappa and Rupar. This is the picture of a potter from Community Development Block, Batala in the Punjab. Potters displaced from West Punjab have been rehabilitated here with the help and encouragement of the Block authorities.

Fishermen of
the South

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